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which was much stronger than that led by Mr. Burton in the previous Congress, was of such a character and reached such proportions that its meaning cannot possibly be misunderstood. A few years ago an attempt was made by some of us to induce some member or members of Congress to take up the subject of arbitration and peace and make it an object of specific attention and effort, in some systematic way, as had already been done in the British House of Commons by Henry Richard and later by Mr. Cremer. But not a man could be found who showed the least disposition to do anything of the sort. But now, on the spontaneous initiative of Mr. Bartholdt, an Inter-parliamentary Arbitration Group has been formed in Congress and has grown in two and a half years to over two hundred members, who are actively engaged in strengthening and advancing arbitration as a substitute for war, not only in Washington, but also in coöperation with similar groups in other countries.

This is a very great advance, quickly made. It means much in itself, but much more when the fact is taken into account that behind it is a vast and rapidly growing popular movement, of which it is simply the most important expression. This movement is throwing its waves against the doors of every government and parliament, and many of them it has already entered and practically mastered.

It would be impossible to overestimate the significance of the vote of 103 against 135 cast for Mr. Burton's motion to strike out of the naval bill the provision for the big new battleship. A change of only 17 votes would have defeated the provision. This vote was not simply an approval of the principle of arbitration and international friendship: it was a direct attack upon the prevailing rivalry of armaments, the gigantic evil which is exhausting the peoples of the world and imperiling more or less all the higher interests of civilization.

Nor was it a mere passing spasmodic effort. It will be repeated again next year, unless in the meantime the coming Hague Conference shall make it unnecessary to do so. Congressmen are saying openly that they will never vote again to add another battleship to the navy. Seventy-five out of the 135 who voted against Mr. Burton's motion are reported to have declared that this is the last vote of the kind that they will cast. This may or may not prove to be true when the test comes. But in any event the hour of deliverance from the insane rivalry of armaments, with which all the best phases of our civilization are entirely out of harmony, is about to strike, and no efforts of those who would keep the barbarisms of the past alive can put back the hand on the dial plate.

This number is given up largely to the interesting proceedings of the seventy-eighth annual meeting of the American Peace Society.

The House of Commons on Armaments.

Even more worthy of note than the protest in our Congress against further increase of the navy was the unanimous adoption by the British House of Commons on the 9th of May of the following resolution, introduced by Mr. Henry Vivian of Birkenhead, one of the labor members:

"This House is of opinion that the growth of expenditure on armaments is excessive, and ought to be reduced. Such expenditure lessens national and commercial credit, intensifies the unemployed problem, reduces the resources available for social reform, and presses with exceptional severity on the industrial classes, and the House therefore calls upon the Government to take drastic steps to reduce the drain on national income, and to this end to press for the inclusion of the question of the reduction of armaments by international agreement in the agenda of the forthcoming Hague Conference."

Mr. Vivian supported the resolution in a short speech in which he said that he had offered it because the constituencies would expect something to be done to carry out the pledges made during the election, and because a declaration made by the British government would have a great effect on the other parliaments of the world respecting the "bloated armaments" now kept up. He was sorry that the Czar of Russia had not renewed in his recent circular the appeal for reduction of armaments made in his Rescript of 1899, and he hoped that the British government would take not a second or third but a leading place in the effort to bring about a reduction by international agreement of expenditures for war purposes.

Mr. Fenwick, a labor member from Northumberland, in seconding the resolution, declared that the security of the empire was not better than it was twenty years ago, though the cost of the "services" had doubled. He had long hoped that some government would face the subject boldly and courageously and bring about by international agreement a proportionate reduction of armaments. The government that would do this would win the eternal gratitude of the industrial classes of the country.

An effort to destroy the force of the resolution was made by Mr. Bellairs, who proposed an amendment to the effect that British naval supremacy must be maintained, and that it was inadvisable that the government should initiate a discussion of the subject of limitation of armaments, and that Great Britain must wait for other powers to move in the matter.

The resolution was objected to by other members, including Ex-Premier Balfour, who declared himself ready to follow suit, if foreign nations were prepared

to diminish their armaments. But the ultimatum sent to Turkey and the offensive purposes of other nations rendered it necessary for them to be in a state of preparedness for contingencies. Their great fleet was defensive only, and it was necessary for their islands. They must have an army sufficient for home defense and a great fleet to secure them against any combination.

Sir Edward Grey, Secretary for Foreign Affairs, supported Mr. Vivian's resolution in a brief but strong and most sensible speech. He said that Mr. Balfour in his remarks had ignored the whole point raised by the resolution, which was not abolition of armaments, but only their reduction. The Turkish affair was in the way of satisfactory settlement. The national expenditure, which had grown enormously, could be reduced without jeopardizing national safety. A good deal depended no doubt on the policy of other countries. But a declaration of the kind proposed was worth having for the effect it might produce on other countries. There was a strong feeling in favor of reduction in all countries where the burden of armaments was heavy. The purpose of the coming Hague Conference was to promote peace and to lessen the horrors of war. It could do no greater service than to make the conditions of peace less expensive. There were certain offsets to the horrors of war, but against war expenditures there was no offset. They remained, after the excitement and passion were over, a heavy deadweight on the national life, lowering the standard of vitality of the country. That was one of the worst evils of war. The Hague Conference could aspire to no greater task than to bring about a reduction of armaments. This was more urgent now than when the first Conference met. As to waiting for foreign nations to move, they were all waiting upon each other. Some day somebody must take the first step. He hoped the amendment to the resolution would not be pressed, as it would preclude their taking the initiative at The Hague. They must, of course, find out the wishes of other powers. Some other power might take the initiative, but they should not be precluded from doing so. They must do all in their power to have the subject brought forward in the most practical form. He not only accepted, on behalf of the government, but welcomed Mr. Vivian's resolution. He trusted that it would be taken in other countries as an invitation from the British House of Commons to respond to their feelings in favor of reduction of armaments.

In response to this appeal, Mr. Bellairs withdrew his amendment and Mr. Vivian's resolution was agreed to without any opposition.

This action of the House of Commons, initiated by the labor element and supported and virtually led

by the government, is unquestionably, by reason of England's place in the world, the most encouraging event that has yet taken place in relation to the final solution of the problem of general peace. The question of disarmament, or even of limitation and reduction of armaments, is not by any means the chief phase of the problem. But this action clearly denotes that the movement on its constructive side — international association, the development of arbitration, the existence of the Permanent International Court, the near approach of the creation of a congress of nations — is so far advanced as to assure early action toward the limitation and reduction of the ruinous armaments in the rivalry of which the governments have apparently gone stark mad. Without the constructive work, militarism would undoubtedly have gone to still greater lengths of insaneness, but, as it is, every one of its excuses for continuing its irrational course is destroyed. One of the greatest governments in the world, backed by the masses of its people, has spoken, seriously and deliberately, and declared that the hour to call a halt has come. Its voice will be heard, for the desire to say the same thing has grown strong in nearly every great capital of the earth.

Let our own government, before Congress adjourns, say the same great word on this side the Atlantic and the thing will be soon done.

Editorial Notes.

It is impossible for us to give any accurate estimate of the extent to which the 18th of May, the anniversary of the opening of the Hague Conference, was observed this year throughout the country. But from the details which are coming in, we are sure that the observance was even greater and more enthusiastic than we had dared to expect. At Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Cincinnati, Providence and other cities, the peace societies and other organizations held important meetings. At Cincinnati every school in the city from the high schools down had exercises. All the leaders of peace thought were in demand for addresses before college and university gatherings, schools, women's council meetings, etc. Many clergymen used the Sunday either before or after the 18th to inculcate the lessons suggested by the occasion. Large numbers of the schools of Massachusetts had exercises appropriate to the day, either in the form of addresses by prominent persons from the outside, or of short talks by superintendents or teachers, or programs by the pupils themselves. In New Jersey, where the day was observed with peculiar interest and enthusiasm, the letter sent out by the State Superintendent of Public Instruction was read in every high

The Eighteenth
of May.